



Recreation Department

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Shirley Canniff  
Leslie Mayer  
Jen Rothenberg  
Phil Lasker  
Scott Walker  
Josh Fenollosa - Associate  
Sarah Carrier- Associate

MEETING NOTICE

The Park and Recreation Commission  
Tuesday, January 10, 2023  
7:00 PM - REMOTE MEETING via ZOOM

AGENDA

- 1) Open Forum – Public Comment
- 2) Capital Project Updates
  - A - Spy and Parmenter Playgrounds
  - B - Robbins Playground Design
  - C – Arlington Reservoir Phase II – Complete with punch list in spring
  - D - Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project –Complete with punch list in spring
  - E – Hurd Field Project
  - F – Poets Corner
  - G – Arlington Court Needs Assessment
  - H – FY 2024 CPA Requests – Hills Hill Mountain Biking Project & Menotomy Rocks Park Playground/Picnic Area
- 3) Approval of Minutes – 10/25/2022, 11/8/2022, 12/13/2022
- 4) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:
  - a) Open Space and Recreation Plan -TBD
  - b) Historical Commission Discussion - Menotomy Rocks Park - Proposed Meeting January 24, 2023
  - c) Bench Location Menotomy Rocks Park Continued Discussion – Proposed Meeting January 24, 2023
  - d) Open Space Committee Request for Picture Post Replacement – MRP, Reservoir – Proposed Meeting January 24, 2023
  - e) Off Leash Program Review – Proposed Meeting February 28, 2023
  - f) AHS & Public Art Request Review– Proposed Meeting February 14, 2023
- 5) Correspondence Received: MRP Dog Enforcement (Mary Greenwald), Hills Hill MTB (Various). George Buckley (Poets), Off Leash Dogs Reservoir Beach (Augusta Sparks)
- 6) New Business

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.  
When: January 10, 2023 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcufumhpzggG9Qb0sSEmTORzHHIMoceOY0h>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## **ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES**

*December 13, 2022*

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 7:00pm.

**Commission Members:** Phil Lasker, Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Scott Walker, Sarah Carrier and Josh Fenollosa. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

**Anticipated Speakers:** David Morgan and Cecily Miller

**Preliminary Matter:** Mr. Lasker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

**Open Forum:** Ms. Melofchik expressed concerns about the Land Management Plan.

### **Review of Planning Departments CPA Requests Relevant to Park Commission Properties:**

Mr., Morgan reviewed the following CPA requests which he requested Park Commission support:

- 1 – Millbrook Feasibility Study
- 2 – Directional Signage for Arlington Orchard
- 3 –Invasive Weed Control/Harvester
- 4 – No Name Brook – Did not discuss due to relevance
- 5 – 21 Pond Lane Botanical Garden

The Park Commission and Mr. Morgan discussed various elements including the amount requested for each project. The Commission felt the request which most directly impacted their property was the Millbrook Feasibility Study. Ms. Mayer stated that she would abstain from voting as a member of the CPA. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to support the Millbrook Feasibility Study, seconded by Ms. Canniff, and approved 4-0-1.

The Commission stated that items 2 & 4 did not impact Park Land. The Commission stated that although supportive of the removal of the water chestnuts the operational process including harvester storage and use needed to be better vetted.

### **Request for Support Resolution for National Grid Repair Environmental Impact:**

Mr. Morgan reviewed the resolution and request for support and discussed various elements of the resolution for National Grid to repair their lines with the Commission. Mr. Walker motioned to support the resolution, Seconded by Ms. Mayer, and approved 5-0.

### **Public Arts Request – Spy Pond, Thorndike, Monotomy**

Ms. Miller reviewed her request to place public art at Spy, Thorndike, and Menotomy. Ms. Miller described that it was a working partnership with AHS students that had support of the School and Town Administration. Ms. Miller reviewed the language of the signs and proposed locations:

Spy 1 - Floating wetlands installed in Spy Pond to filter water and reduce toxic algae - June 1, 2028

Spy 2 - First winter without Spy Pond hard freeze marks the end of an era and identity for the town - March 19, 2020

Thorndike - Thorndike Park renamed Thorndike Beach at its 150th anniversary floating lantern ceremony - June 20, 2087

Menotomy - The formerly southern pine beetle kills 50 pine trees in Menotomy Rocks Park - August 2047

Mr. Lasker although appreciating the intent was not comfortable with some of the “dark” language in our parks. Other Commissioners agreed that our parks should be happy places and fun places. Mr. Walker commented that maybe they would be more suitable in other sites. Ms. Miller explained the students’ process and intent. Ms. Rothenberg stated that the Commission should have been brought into the conversation earlier and it seems as if it is too late for any input or changes to be made.

Mr. Connelly suggested postponing discussion until a later meeting and that he would set up a meeting with Ms. Miller and to try to modify the current proposal. The Commission agreed on this course of action.

Ms. Rothenberg voiced her frustration and disappointment with Ms. Melofchik’s chat statements with regards to the integrity of the Commission.

Mr. Lasker also expressed frustration over the blatant disrespect for the Park Commission by Ms. Melofchik.

### **Capital Project Update:**

#### **Spy and Parmenter**

- Parmenter waiting on pour for the stairs and installation of the handrail
- Mulch test have been approved for Spy
- Rubber test needs to be sent to a different lab and test again, working with ConCom
- Rubber cannot be installed until the spring but all else should be completed by end of month
- No completion date available at this time, substantial completion by end of month

#### **Robbins Playground**

- Great first public input meeting
- Design team reviewed general concepts
- Next public meeting is 12/19

#### **Arlington Reservoir Phase II**

- Small punch list items remain
  - Planting replacement in spring and clean-up of paths
- Please note that the contract for vacuuming the porous asphalt has been awarded

#### **Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project**

- Bishop is Open – Sealcoating in the spring
- Stratton Open with some minor tweaks in the spring
- Peirce –Open - Sealcoating in the spring with change of to PIP early summer
- All site furnishings are installed at the sites
- All three schools to be open!!!

#### Hurd Field Project

- Majority of project complete
- Issue with Eversource and utility pole move and replacement has been resolved
- Working on patio entrance and pavers
- Field is substantially completed
- We did ask for some additional fencing work to be completed

#### Poets Corner

- Great meeting with all parties involved.
- Filing with Concom on Wetland delineation soon
- Follow up public meeting end of January 2023

#### Playground Safety Inspections 2022

- Buzzell, Hibbert, Hills, Thompson School (late spring) – Three are complete and necessary work completed.

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#### Arlington Court Needs Assessment

- Out to bid and due back on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### CPA Requests – Hills Hill, Menotomy, Turkey Hill

- Final Applications Due Friday
- Packets Have Been Reviewed and will be sent tomorrow pending any changes tonight
- The Commission discussed with drawing the Turkey Hill Application
- *Side note – Buck Field Infield Renovation Underway Paid for by DPE Operating Budget*

**Approval of Minutes:** Tabled

**Comments and Items for Future Meetings:** Tabled

#### **Correspondence Received:**

- Mr. Connelly received many pieces of correspondence regarding Hills Hill. Additional correspondence was received after the agenda was published and will be added to the next agenda.
- A request for lighting at North Union was received. Mr. Connelly noted that lighting plans require that all elements are illuminated. Ms. Mayer inquired if a feasibility study should be conducted to determine the cost to implement a plan at all playgrounds/parks. Ms. Canniff will research other towns lighting

installations. Mr. Fenollosa asked who absorbs the cost of the electricity? Mr. Connelly stated that if the Recreation charges a fee, for example at the Reservoir, then the Recreation Department pays the electricity costs. However, if the location is free for public use, the cost is covered by the town,

**New Business: Tabled**

Ms. Garnett told the Park Commission that she would be moving and would no longer be the Conservation Commission's liaison to the Park Commission. The Park Commission thanked Ms. Garnett for her role and her years of service to the Town of Arlington.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn at 9:30pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 5-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Rothenberg – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Joseph Connelly

## **ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES**

*November 8, 2022*

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday November 8, 2022 at 7:00pm.

**Commission Members:** Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Scott Walker, Sarah Carrier and Josh Fenollosa. Mr. Lasker was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

**Anticipated Speakers:** David Morgan

**Preliminary Matter:** Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission assistant chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

**Open Forum:** N/A

**Review of Planning Departments CPA Requests Relevant to Park Commission Properties** : Tabled. Mr. Morgan could not be in attendance. Discussion will be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

**Request for Support Resolution for National Grid Repair Environmental Impact** : Tabled. Mr. Morgan could not be in attendance. Discussion will be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

- Ms. Mayer noted that the request does not reference Park and Recreation properties.
- Ms. Canniff questioned whether CPA was required to notify abutters of application requests. Ms. Mayer, a CPAC member, stated that CPA is not required to notify abutters unless the funding is approved and the project moves forward.

### **Capital Project Update :**

#### **Spy and Parmenter Playgrounds**

- Parmenter equipment is fully installed, waiting on poured in place rubber, pathway completion, mulch, and fencing.
- Mr. Connelly spoke with the sub-contractor who stated that the black binder surfacing will be installed next week allowing the playground to open. The colored topcoat will be completed in the spring. Mr. Walker inquired if opening the playground for use before the topcoat was installed would affect the warranty. Mr. Connelly stated that there are conditions in the contract for this.
- Spy equipment is being installed, mulch installed, waiting on poured in place scheduling, fencing
- All Dumor site accessories are delayed until December. Due to delays contractors will not book work until equipment is received.
- The mulch and rubber have been tested and sent to Conservation for review.
- No completion date is available at this time, but substantial completion is anticipated by Thanksgiving.

#### **Robbins Playground**

- 11/5 on site kick off public feedback session held, approximately 100 residents stopped by.
- The agency fielded lots of questions and feedback. A preliminary survey is out to the public.
- 11/14 is the first public input session. Schools have been notified, abutter notices mailed, and a town notice was sent out.
- The Commission will stress that the project incorporates Universal Design Principles but is not a Universal Design Playground. Mr. Connelly will be meeting with Cambridge DPW to discuss

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maintenance issues with Universal Design Playgrounds.

- Mr. Fenollosa asked if a conceptual design would be shared at the public input session. Mr. Connelly said that even a conceptual design is not presented at this stage.

#### Arlington Reservoir Phase II

- The handrails to the bridge are complete.
- Small punch list items remain and will be discussed with KZLA. The list includes a full replacement of one of the showers and repairs or replacement of the countertop.
- The temporary fencing will remain in place until spring to allow for the reseeded areas to grow.
  - Planting replacement in spring
  - Interpretive sign for fishing dock
- Please note that the contract for vacuuming the porous asphalt is out to bid. Mr. Fenollosa requested a description of what the vacuuming entailed. Mr. Connelly explained that it was a condition requested by ConCom as part of the maintenance for the porous pavement.

#### Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project

- Bishop is open. Sealcoating will be completed in the spring.
- Stratton passed inspection and will open on Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>. Some minor adjustments will be made in the spring.
- Equipment is being installed at Peirce. The playground could potentially be ready to open on November 21. Temporary mulch surfacing will be installed for school year. Rubber will be installed in the early summer. Sealcoating will take place in the spring
- All site furnishings are installed at the sites. The accessible spinner element at Peirce will be closed until spring due to potential damage from use on a mulch surface.
- All three schools to be open within three weeks of the anticipated completion date.

#### Hurd Field Project

- The path is complete. Sod is being installed this week. Irrigated is installed and will be tested this week. Most of the fencing is complete. Lights installation is complete.
- There is an issue with Eversource and the utility pole move and replacement which is delaying work of the entry plaza.
- The field will be substantially completed this fall with a potential opening in May or June of next year.
- Mr. Connelly did visit the site during the heavy rains over the past couple of weeks to see how the drainage was working. He noted that there was puddling during the storms but revisited the site the following day and the area was dry.

#### Poets Corner

- Mr. Connelly will meet with Belmont Hill and the Archdiocese Thanksgiving week.
- Data is being accumulated from the gas meters and GeoTeck (spelling ?) testing.
- Ms. Garnett noted that the data had not been forwarded to ConCom.
- Mr. Connelly shared that all feedback so far has been positive, with one exception. A citizen expressed concern about giving up space to private schools and limiting access to the public. Mr. Connelly explained that the project in fact helps the town gain usable space.
- A public meeting will be scheduled to update the public on status.

#### Playground Safety Inspections 2022

- Buzzell, Hibbert, Hills, Thompson School inspections are complete. Repairs are underway.
- Mr. Connelly noted that the process for auditing and funding has allowed for repairs to be completed quicker than in the past.

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CPA Requests – Hills Hill, Menotomy, Turkey Hill

- All recreation requests were submitted by deadline. Mr. Connelly did include the documentation from 1945 including the eminent domain language.
- The first CPA meeting was held on November 2.
- CPAC allowed for comments from residents during the meeting regarding Hills Hill.
- Ms. Mayer provided an update : CPA received a record number of applications this year. There is not enough funding for all the project requests. Some projects were put on hold because of how the project was categorized and presented. All three Recreation projects were deemed “eligible”. The public contingency spoke in opposition to Hills Hill. Ms. Mayer believes that the three Recreation projects will be invited to submit a final application. She also noted that the Legislature did approve additional funding to support CPA. The amount has not been determined.

**Approval of Minutes:** Tabled. A quorum was not present.

**Special Event Approval :** The Somerville Homeless Coalition is requesting to host the annual sleepover at Florence Field on November 18. Officer Joseph Canniff will be present. Mr. Connelly shared that the event has been successful in the past and the group follows all conditions including clean up. Ms. Canniff stated that going forward the event would continue to be held in the fall because it is a crucial time of year for fundraising to support the homeless in the colder months.

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the event, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 3-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

**Bench Donation Request :** Mr. Connelly has discussed the request submitted with Mr. Puttick. The bench is located behind the other donated bench at the Reservoir. Mr. Puttick requested that his wife’s name include her maiden name. The quote that will be included in the dedication has been shortened to fit the bench.

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the bench dedication, as updated, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 3-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

Ms. Garnett stated that during a walk on the berm at the Reservoir she noticed areas that were unstable and was wondering if there was a work order for repairs.

- Mr. Connelly has consulted KZLA for an inspection and requested a cost estimate from Semco (?) but did note that there are limitations on repeated repairs to a natural berm.
- Ms. Mayer also noted that there is signage at both access points stating that the berm is not accessible.

Mr. Fenollosa inquired about the draft documents for the courts study.

- Mr. Connelly explained that there will be a needs assessment to look at existing conditions and recommendations for usage. Public feedback will also be taken into consideration. There may be potential for “court complexes” for multi-use in addition to dedicated use courts.
- Mr. Walker inquired about the expected budget. Mr. Connelly shared that he will potentially need to combine two years of feasibility money to pay the expected \$20-25K.
- Ms. Garnett noted that Grove Street is well used because it is lit. Mr. Connelly encouraged support of the Musco Lighting System which allows a designated person to control when the lights go on and off and set

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timers.

**Comments and Items for Future Meetings:**

- Open Space and Recreation Plan – Update will be provided when plan is available.
- Historical Commission Discussion, Menotomy Rocks Park – The Historical Commission will submit a request in writing in regards to the benches. Mr. Connelly has already consulted Town Counsel.
- Off-Leash Proposal at Parallel Park – Town Counsel has advised that there is nothing in the DCR lease agreement restricting use for recreation purposes. If the Commission decides to move forward, a public input session will be held to collect feedback from abutters. Ms. Garnett and Mr. Fenollosa noted that they have both seen off-leash dogs at the park midday. Ms. Mayer suggested that a discussion be held to reevaluate the off-leash dog program. Mr. Connelly shared that the ACO has resigned and the position is currently vacant. The Commission will discuss the issue further at a future meeting.

**Correspondence Received:**

- Mr. Connelly received many pieces of correspondence regarding Hills Hill. Additional correspondence was received after the agenda was published and will be added to the next agenda.
- A request for lighting at North Union was received. Mr. Connelly noted that lighting plans require that all elements are illuminated. Ms. Mayer inquired if a feasibility study should be conducted to determine the cost to implement a plan at all playgrounds/parks. Ms. Canniff will research other towns lighting installations. Mr. Fenollosa asked who absorbs the cost of the electricity? Mr. Connelly stated that if the Recreation charges a fee, for example at the Reservoir, then the Recreation Department pays the electricity costs. However, if the location is free for public use, the cost is covered by the town,

**New Business:**

- Ms. Mayer attended the maintenance group meeting and shared concerns about the direction and impact on the budget and DPW. The group was initially started by Jim Feeney and then continued by Emily Sullivan with the purpose of evaluating maintenance needs and standards for all town property. Ms. Mayer noted that the group did not focus on items that were Recreation based. Ms. Garnett suggested that the group be invited to a future PRC and ConCom meeting before the study is released to discuss the limited focus and available funding. Mr. Connelly will add the discussion as an agenda item for a future meeting when David Morgan is available. The Commission agrees that a more unified approach is necessary.
- Mr. Fenollosa inquired about the work being done at Mt. Gilboa and Cooke's Hollow. Ms. Garnett noted that both are ConCom properties, not Recreation. Ms. Mayer noted that both projects received CPA funding approval last year. The projects were initially brought to CPA by town citizens. CPA requests that citizen requests be sponsored by an official town entity, commission or committee. ConCom sponsored the projects. Ms. Garnett stated that she will bring feedback to ConCom that more oversight is needed at each location.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn at 8:26pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Rothenberg – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes



- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Mr. Walker – Yes

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

## **ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES**

*October 25, 2022*

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday October 25, 2022 at 7:00pm.

**Commission Members:** Phil Lasker, Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Shirley Canniff, Sarah Carrier and Josh Fenollosa. Mr. Walker was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

**Anticipated Speakers:** Nicholas Boit, JoAnn Robinson, Peter Howard

**Preliminary Matter:** Phil Lasker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

**Open Forum :** N/A

**Pond Lane Project Proposal** : Nicholas and Belinda Boit presented plans to improve esthetics and drainage at their home located at 20 Pond Lane, abutting the AB Crew area. Due to excessive flooding the Boit's are planning to remove the asphalt on the property and replace it with crushed stone and water-friendly trees such as yellow birch. They are also contemplating fencing off the area between the properties and hoping to remove the guardrail installed at the site. The Boits are offering to do this at their own expense. The Commission expressed support for the project but requested that the Boit's consider additional plantings in lieu of a fence to create a natural buffer zone.

- Mr. Connelly stated that AB Crew is in the process of hiring a contractor and getting pricing.
- Mr. Fenollosa suggested that a more engineered solution may be needed to control the flooding in the area. The area is one of the lowest points in Arlington according to GPS maps.
- Mr. Connelly will reach out to DPW regarding removal of the guardrail and set up a meeting with the Boits and the tree warden.

Ms. Mayer made a motion to approve the plan to beautify the area, remove the asphalt and install crushed stone and plantings, pending approved by the tree warden. Seconded by Ms. Canniff.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 4-0.

**Menotomy Rocks Park Historical Commission Discussion** : Mr. Connelly provided a summary of the discussion; A request was received for new benches to be donated at MRP. A meeting was held to discuss the location for installation. DPW removed the two old, green benches and poured the concrete slab for the new benches. Friends of MRP expressed concern over the removal of the benches as they feel that they are historical.

- Mr. Howard presented a history of the original 5 benches, installed in the 1930s. Since that time 13 memorial benches have been installed with the approval of the Commission. Mr. Howard was hired privately by the FOMRP to repair and restore the benches over the years. The FOMRP and the Historical Commission were not consulted prior to the removal of the two benches. Mr. Howard is requesting that the Commission preserve the "historical fabric" of the park by replacing the two benches with similar customized benches that he located through a Connecticut company costing about \$2500-2600 each.

- Ms. Robinson also expressed her concerns about the removal of the benches stating that the Commission should consider a new location for the accessible benches and install benches similar to the originals at the site. She also stated the FOMRP is willing to pay for the benches as part of a compromise.
- Mr. Connelly reviewed the ADA requirements, maintenance needs and costs.
- The Commissioners discussed the definition of a location and it's attributes being defined as historical as well as maintainability and longevity of the elements within the park and must be acknowledged when considering DPW involvement. Standardizing the elements of Arlington parks will assist DPW in addressing and performing effective maintenance.
- Ms. Rothenberg noted that FOMRP had installed many "non-historic elements" in the park without the approval of PRC.
- Mr. Connelly did complete a walkthrough with Judy Weinberg prior to the removal of the benches. He also spoke to Doug Heim who did state that MRP was not under historical jurisdiction.
- Ms. Carrier believes that accessibility and historical preservation should not be mutually exclusive and urged for a compromise.
- Ms. Robinson stated that an inventory of the park and it's historical designation is in process.
- Ms. Garnett shared her experience working with DCR stating that historic and contemporary needs must be evaluated for effective compromise.
- Ms. Melofchik applauded Ms. Robinson and Mr. Howard for their dedication to MRP and stated that she wants the Commission to install replica benches at the original location.

The benches have been ordered and the concrete slab has been poured. The Commission will not remove any additional benches until there is a plan in place. Mr. Connelly will meet with Mr. Howard. Mr. Connelly will be reaching out to the Friends groups to reinstate quarterly meetings with PRC.

**Special Event Approval : N/A**

**Minutes** : Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the minutes of 10/11/2022, as amended, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 3-0.

**Correspondence Received:** Several letters regarding Hills Hill were received regarding the project, the public process and the EcoTrack. Correspondence was also received regarding bicycle riding on the path at Spy Pond. Mr. Connelly will follow up with the Bicycle Committee for recommendations. Ms. Canniff shared that in a recent trip to London she noticed that there was signage stating that no bicycles or dogs were permitted in parks.

**Comments and Items for Future Meetings:** Mr. Connelly is following up with Town Counsel regarding DCR research on off-leash dogs at Parallel Park. Mr. Connelly will forward the RFP to the Commission regarding the basketball court for feedback. Ms. Canniff stated that the Open Space meeting is scheduled for Thursday evening to discuss the Open Space plan. Ms. Rothenberg cannot attend the upcoming Public Management Group meeting. Mr. Lasker and Ms. Mayer offered to attend in her place. Mr. Connelly has discussed the CPA request with David Morgan. The Commission will discuss the CPA requests at the next meeting.

**New Business:** N/A

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Ms. Mayer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:16pm, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg.

Roll call vote:

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

Approved 4-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

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**From:** Mary Greenwald <megreenwald@verizon.net>  
**To:** "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>, "dheim@town.arlington.ma.us" <dheim@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 01/02/2023 08:01 AM  
**Subject:** Leash Law Enforcement / Menotomy Rocks Park

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Dear Mr. Connelly and Mr. Heim:

I'm writing to register a complaint about the lack of enforcement of the statewide leash law at Menotomy Rocks Park (MRP). As Town officials are aware, disregard of the leash law is an endemic problem at MRP; it's known as the "wild west" of Arlington parks for this reason.

Nearly every time I visit MRP, my neighborhood park, I see dogs roaming free outside of designated off-leash hours. As someone who relies on a service dog to balance and walk, unleashed dogs pose a real danger. I am constantly put in the position of having to ask owners to keep their unleashed dogs away, which they often cannot do because the dog is beyond reach or ignores voice commands. When an untethered dog comes running up and jumps on/bumps into me or my service dog, it causes me to fall and risk serious injury

In my experience, these owners are aware of the leash law but choose to disregard it. They justify this on the grounds that their dog is friendly/old/well-behaved or otherwise entitled to an exception to legal requirements. They fail to appreciate that, for others, an unleashed dog presents a legitimate threat. Moreover, because the leash law is rarely enforced, they are confident they can violate it with impunity.

It is the Town's responsibility to rectify this situation by actively enforcing the leash law at MRP. This calls for regularly patrolling the park and consistently issuing citations for violations. Community safety demands it. Many people have reported being physically injured and/or emotionally distressed by encounters with unleashed dogs at MRP; others avoid the park all together due to its reputation as an unsafe place. Failure to enforce leash law compliance will likely lead to further injuries and, potentially, financial liability for the Town.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and please keep me apprised of the steps the Town plans to take to address it.

Best wishes,

Mary Greenwald, J.D.  
90 Gray Street, Arlington, MA 02476  
[megreenwald@verizon.net](mailto:megreenwald@verizon.net)

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**From:** John Belanger <belanger\_john\_michael@yahoo.com>  
**To:** "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 12/21/2022 01:38 PM  
**Subject:** Hills Hill Mountain Biking

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Dear CPA Committee,

I may have missed the deadline for commentary but I wanted to put in my two cents.

I am an 49 year old mountain bike enthusiast who has gotten enormous benefits from the time I've spent outside on my mountain bike. I've gotten my entire family outside to enjoy fresh air and to build confidence through bike skills. I am TOTALLY behind a Hills Hill bike park! Both my son Ian (15) and my daughter (17) would use a new mountain bike area. Giving kids reasons to get off their phones have huge benefits.

Thx,  
-John Belanger

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**From:** catherine fenollosa <cfenollosa@gmail.com>  
**To:** Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 11/07/2022 04:33 PM  
**Subject:** Support for Mountain Bike Park

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission,

I am writing in support of the proposed mountain bike trails in Hills Hill.

Why am I in support? Because I'm a parent to three kids who love being outside. As a family, we hike and bike together. It's a way to keep our family close, to get exercise and have fun, and we've searched for ways to do that in our town. The proposed site is ideal as it's on the campus of the Rec Center and adjacent to the bike path.

But my support goes far beyond that because biking is one of the few recreational activities my oldest son can participate in. He has paralysis in his left leg. His disability has made all the typical sports many kids in our community participate in like soccer, basketball, hockey, utterly impossible for him. Weekends when his classmates and their families gather at a field or in a gym for a soccer or hockey game, he has always been excluded.

But when he found biking - a sport where he could rely on his strong right leg to propel the bike forward, his world changed. Finally he was able to be just "one of the kids." He could meet up with his friends, burn off some energy, and have a normal, ordinary experience perhaps many of us take for granted.

I've heard the argument that bike trails at Hills Hill are inappropriate because all of Arlington's open land should be preserved. Thankfully, we are so fortunate to have Menotomy Rocks Park, Mount Gilboa, the Crusher Lot, The Great Meadow, Spy Pond, Robbins Farm and many more. However, what we are missing is a place for kids to recreate outside of organized sports. As we as a town strive to be more inclusive, we cannot ignore our youngest residents who may not have the ability or inclination to join a town team. They too should have public spaces for exercise.

Finally, we have all been impacted by COVID, but it's especially taken a toll on our youth. Before the pandemic, nearly half (49.5%) of all kids under 18 reported feeling anxious, depressed and/or stressed. According to the National

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Institute of Health, COVID has significantly increased those numbers. Arlington is not immune.

And yet, there are studies that point to the incredible benefits recreation has in lowering fear, stress and anxiety among young people. As a parent, I've seen firsthand how my kids' moods are lifted when they've spent time outside biking with friends, and how they form relationships, learn resilience and build confidence when they recreate with their peers outside of organized sports.

It is ironic that little attention was paid to the Crusher Lot or Hills Hill until the proposal came forward. No one was clamoring to preserve or even clean up those lands until the kids wanted to ride their bikes there. The kids were the ones with trash bags, picking up broken glass and empty beer cans. As a result, they have learned to be good stewards of the land and to respect the environment because it is nature that provides a playground for them. We often hear complaints that kids should get off of screens yet when they come forward to ask for space to do just that, there are some who say no.

We have an incredible opportunity to answer a very clear need in our community by providing a public space for our kids to gather, where all kids regardless of age or ability can participate.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Fenollosa

PS: I want to thank the Commission for working to make Arlington's parks universally accessible. When my son was little, he used a medical walker. At the time, all of the town's playground either had sand or bark mulch which prevented him from accessing the play structures on his own with his walker. A visit to a playground ended in frustration and tears. So a very big thank you for seeing that ALL KIDS are worthy and deserving of a space to play.

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**From:** Sarah Montague <sarahmontague11@gmail.com>  
**To:** jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us  
**Date:** 12/28/2022 02:12 PM  
**Subject:** Concerns about Hills Hill

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I have serious concerns about the initial proposal to build a mountain bike park inside the Hill's Hill Woods,

Please ensure any bike project excludes construction (beyond trails) in the woods, as described in the Eco Track alternative.

Thank you,

Sent from my iPhone

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